Manufacture of UAVs

264. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Rs. 500 crore project has been launched for the indigenous manufacture of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or spy drones which, reportedly, entails active collaboration between the Bangalore-based Aeronautical Development Establishment and the Israel Aircraft Industries, to boost the surveillance and precision strike capabilities of the armed forces; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and its present status?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. DRDO is developing a road map to meet future requirements of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for the Services in partnership with the Indian industries.

Indo-Sri Lanka defence dialogue

†265. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a dialogue for co-operation in the field of defence is in process between India and Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the agreement in the field of defence between both the countries is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There is no institutionalized dialogue for defence cooperation. However, Defence cooperation with Sri Lanka is conducted through the Indian High Commission in Colombo and exchanges of high-level visits, as part of Indo-Sri Lanka overall bilateral relations.

(b) Defence cooperation between India and Sri Lanka has been mainly in the area of training for Sri Lankan defence personnel in Indian defence training institutions, flood and Tsunami related relief assistance, high-level

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.